

Following are articles printed in newspapers in recent days that may be of interest to employees. Some of these are articles were not posted in the daily clip report on the Intranet.

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Deal Shredded By Politics

Last year, R.J. Reynolds signed the historic June 20 Proposed Resolution, which remains the most comprehensive and realistic solution proposed concerning the manufacture, marketing and sale of tobacco products.

As Matt Myers of the National Center for Tobacco Free Kids put it: "This plan offers the best hope for protecting our children. ... the single most fundamental change in the history of tobacco control ..."

Reynolds Tobacco stands by its commitment to the provisions and goals of the June 20 resolution. But that carefully crafted agreement has been torn to shreds by those who would practice the politics of punishment rather than trying to forge an aggressive, workable plan to keep kids away from cigarettes.

The political process has turned from any rational and sensible discussions of this agreement to one focused on politics and the desire for money. It has dashed any hopes of enacting the agreement negotiated by the industry and its staunchest opponents. The debate now focuses on big taxes, big government and the loss of individual freedoms.

We hear a deafening cry for huge tax increases to fund a fatter government on the backs of those least able to afford it. Washington wants you to believe the price of cigarettes will increase only \$1.10 a pack. But, in reality, Washington's proposals would double or triple the price of cigarettes -- to \$5-\$6 a pack.

All this will do is punish the 47 million adults who choose to smoke, strapping them with more than \$500 billion in new taxes to pay for new programs unrelated to youth smoking and for tax cuts for the wealthy.

These price increases will create a criminal black market in which kids would be able to buy tobacco no matter what access laws are enacted. And they will jeopardize the livelihoods of 1.8 million Americans whose jobs are tied to tobacco: including growers, manufacturers, suppliers, truckers and store clerks.

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